

EULOGY FOR MARY ELLEN SHEA

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2018

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege and honor of working with Mary Ellen Shea over the years. She was an extraordinary woman, loved by all at the Connecticut State Capitol. I include in the RECORD this obituary, written by her daughter, Mary Frances Shea.

My mom loved my dad. And he loved her. But before that she was born in 1932 in Hartford, to a single young mother. It was a bit unconventional for the times . . . but with the help of her grandfather she found, in her school and friends, something she was good at. She used her ample personality, unique style and insightful vision to draw people to her and with these gifts and she gave her life some structure.

She loved the friends she would gather throughout her high school and college years. She was drawn to people with fun, outgoing and stable lives.

She was nothing if not practical, easy to entertain and driven to make something happen. It was in this atmosphere that she met my dad, Bob. She was even-handed and spirited. He was a planner and a "don't sweat the small stuff" guy. He really made her laugh . . . always. Even this week in the hospital. He was always going for the laugh with her and he got it . . . often. Her laugh and "Oh Bob" was a constant in their home and our lives.

First they were a good team.

And then team leaders.

There are 5 of us. The starting 5.

Tom is smart like her. She was captured by Tommy. As a little boy he charmed her, he made her think. She was always listening for that thing he was going to say that was smarter and funnier and really sly. He is clever enough to savagely mimic her and get away with it while she laughed and laughed. She lit up when Tommy came into the room. None of the rest of us had that. He was the first and that was something.

When I was 6 she took me out to the back yard where we had a huge lilac bush. She cut a big bunch of them and I can smell the sumptuous smell right now. You can too. She wrapped them in wet paper towels and put a string around them. She gave them to me to bring to my teacher for the last day. Many of you know my mom spent years as a teacher.

She told me to say "thank you for teaching me".

I love that memory because it comes with an aroma. It is the aroma of love and gratitude. What a lesson.

Tim is her middle child. He is so much like her in that he takes care to make sure that everything is running smoothly, that everyone is okay, that the trains are running on time. He is a planner and, he, too is practical. He is the perfect combination of my dad and my mom. The middle. She counted on him. She felt great pride in his success as a family man. She loved his wife, Laura. She was awestruck and amazed by his charity and his kindness. She told me that, so I am telling all of you.

My sister was the great joy in my mom's life. She had the home team family. As we all struggled with the distance, Mary Liz shared her kids and family life joyously. They spent time in each other's lives, holidays and average days. My sis and my mother had a short hand, like there was always an inside joke. They were close in a way that

supersedes deep conversation, it was more about silliness, respect and ever a sense of fun that would find them at the garage sale or the UConn Women's game or just sitting down at dinner. My mom sincerely loves all of her children and grandchildren but it is unmistakable that Liz, David and their kids had more of my mom's fingerprint on them. It's true.

My mother had 5 and her last is John. John got away with everything and never had to do anything but look at her, to make her smile. She gave John a pass, loved absolutely everything he did and said, especially when he married Lisa. The rest of us would make note of the fact that John had different parents. He got the mom who was relaxed and chill, the one who let things slide just a little more. And John knew how to capitalize on his good fortune. The rest of us had parents, he had bud's. She loved her baby. Yes I said it. That's what he was to her.

If we all did anything perfectly, in my mom's eyes, it was to bring our children to Black Point Beach for the summer. It was there that their 8 grandchildren were drawn, like magnets to 31 Seabreeze where they would eat horribly sweet cereal—and watch Bananas in Pajamas videos—and be read to by Grandma. If you ask them, this was a unique and special bliss that they will forever share with only each other. That's how you make memories and families. She knew the special recipe. She has 8 grandchildren, all here, together with her new great granddaughter who is currently stealing the show. She loved her grandkids . . . each one uniquely and now from afar.

A few other things to note about my mom

As I mentioned, my mom was a teacher but in the mid-70's she got an opportunity to take a small job at the State Capital in the House Clerk's Office with a couple of her high school chums. She loved the characters and the drama of the daily policy making. She was good at it. She eventually worked for the then, Speaker of the House. He's here today Tom Ritter. She loved you, Tom. And she loved Shelley, too! If you knew her then, you knew how much she loved it there. Those Capital days . . . they were a very, very special time in her life.

In her 50's she found out about her birth father, discovered he had had 6 kids, who when she met, embraced her. That was fun for her.

My mom chose her friends carefully. As you all know, you who are lucky enough to have known her as a best friend (Ann, Sally, Maureen and MaryBeth) and others out there,

She was a great listener and in that way, she gave good, practical advice. Here's the formula. Listen, for a very long time. Consider carefully, and then, quietly, say something practical. There it is.

I can almost do it all myself, now. Try it for yourself.

If you were her friend, or her acquaintance her neighbor, congratulations. She was so lovely. You won.

My mom had a fulfilling and wonderful life.

Such a long and winding road of a life.

It's best to share twists and turns with somebody . . . and share she did. She often said that she was so lucky to have found and married my dad. She always said it. Remember how much I stressed fun and stability? Well, that is Bob Shea. I can attest that this is a great combination of strengths when conjuring a father, but as a husband it was the winning formula, for sure.

I'm going to sum up their marriage and it's going to sound simple but it is not, at all. Bob and Mary Ellen were nice to each other. They talked about everything. They were, without reservation, about family . . . and friends . . .

My mom loved my dad and he loved her.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF SANGAMON COUNTY FARM BUREAU

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2018

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to honor a remarkable organization, the Sangamon County Farm Bureau. The Sangamon County Farm Bureau in Central Illinois is an integral organization that promotes agricultural prosperity. After many years of success and service, the Sangamon County Farm Bureau is celebrating their 100th anniversary.

Sangamon County Farm Bureau was chartered on December 20, 1918 to unite farmers in the area and advocate for central Illinois agriculture collectively. Today, the group has almost 10,000 members supporting the agrarian community and economy throughout the county.

Not only does Sangamon County Farm Bureau provide a voice for farmers and promote the development of agriculture, but they also educate and empower future leaders in agriculture. Sangamon County Farm Bureau's Young Leaders program develops leadership skills for youth with agriculture interests. Additionally, Sangamon County Farm Bureau coordinates the USDA's Agriculture in the Classroom Program to teach students the important role agriculture plays in the state of Illinois.

Illinois has become a major economic force within the agricultural sector because of farm bureaus like Sangamon County that come together and enhance opportunities for local farmers, their families, and the community as a whole. I extend my sincere congratulations to Sangamon County Farm Bureau for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions to Illinois. I hope the organization continues to grow and prosper for the next one hundred years.

RECOGNIZING DALE ELDRIDGE KAYE

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2018

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dale Eldridge Kaye of Livermore, California on her retirement. Dale has lived in the Tri-Valley for 17 years and has worked tirelessly to develop our community.

Prior to moving to California, Dale was involved in the Florida state government. She utilized her keen marketing skills to develop media strategies, execute presidential advance work, and to help bring the Super Bowl to Jacksonville in 2005. As Head of the Jacksonville Public Relations Department, Dale's exceptional marketing work for the Jacksonville Jazz Festival was nationally recognized by PBS. She continued to cultivate her love of the arts after moving to California as Vice President of the film company Gold'N Hen Productions in Los Angeles before moving to the Tri-Valley.